BILL FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to move for permission to introduce a Bill for the prevention of cruelty to animals. It has long been my desire to see a legislative enactment passed on the subject and in the early days of this Council, I asked the late Mr. Watts to introduce such a Bill. But unfortunately he was unable to fulfil his pledge. Now that I have the chance myself, I take the earliest opportunity of bringing the matter before the Council. That there is cruelty committed almost every day in the streets is, I think, within the experience of all; this being so and as there is a good deal of business to be got through at this meeting, I think it will be unnecessary for me to enlarge on this aspect of the subject. At present the only protection that dumb animals have is the power given to a Police-officer under clause 2 of section 23 of the Police Regulation to arrest without warrant any person who within view wantonly or cruelly abuses or tortures any animal. So far as I am aware, this power is never used and I have never heard of any prosecution under this section. I think, therefore, that some further powers should be provided by the law to secure this object. I have drafted this Bill on the lines of Act X of 1890 of British India, and the fact that it has been found desirable and useful in other parts of India to introduce legislation on the subject will, I trust, induce the Council to accord their ready sanction to the introduction of the Bill.

Permission was granted accordingly.

BREACH OF CONTRACT REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. Rajaram Row.—I beg to introduce a Bill for the amendment of the present law on the subject of criminally dealing with breaches of contract by artificers and labourers. That law is contained in Regulation I of 1040, and was passed on the lines of British Indian Act XIII of 1859. Some of its provisions are anomalous and the law itself is not sufficiently effective. All jurisdiction over cases falling under it was restricted to the Zillah Criminal, the present Sessions, Courts, and although by Regulation II of 1052 it was extended to the then Division Magistrates, that is, the present District Magistrates, and to certain others who might be invested with the same powers by Government, the original jurisdiction which the Sessions Courts were at first given still continues in their hands, while in no other class of criminal cases it is so. It is now possible for an employer to prosecute a defaulting contractor of a distant village in Shencottah before the Sessions Court of Quilon and thus cause him serious inconvenience. This state of matters requires mending, and local Magistrates of a certain grade should have the power to deal with such cases. One of the sections of Regulation I of 1040 is redundant, inasmuch as it has a place in our Penal Code. Moreover, as already observed, the present Regulation is not sufficiently effective, and inconvenience is felt by certain large classes of employers. Seeing that there is a heavy programme before the Council to be gone through this evening, I will not enter into further explanations. With a view to place matters on a better footing, I shall, if you will grant the permission I seek, place before you at a future meeting a Bill to amend the present law.

Permission was granted accordingly.

LUNACY BILL.

Mr. Kunhiraman Nair.—At the last meeting of the Council, I obtained permission to introduce the Lunacy Bill which, with the usual Statement of Objects and Reasons, has since been published in the Government Gazette. The Bill, as stated in the preamble, is designed to make provision for the care of the person and the estates of lunatics, and for their reception and detention in Lunatic Asylums established by Government. The necessity for legislation on the subject has been briefly touched upon in the Statement of Objects and Reasons and in my remarks at the last meeting, and is self-evident when I say that there is no statutory provision in this State for the care of the property and person of civil lunatics, *i. e.*, lunatics not accused or convicted of any offence, Chapter 33 of the Criminal Procedure Code being applicable only to criminal lunatics. Since the publication of the Bill, a case in which the District Magistrate of Alleppey, Mr. Maltby, found himself unable, by reason of the non-existence of a special law, to afford adequate protection to a

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly